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FOL THE HAGUE SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BRUSSELS CURACAO
GENEVA HAVANA JAKARTA PARAMARIBO PARIS STOCKHOLM VIENNA USUN
FEB 22, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

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USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

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SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT AID: NEW FACES,NEW POLICIES

1. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE NEW DUTCH MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION, JAN DE KONING, AND HIS PREDECESSOR,JAN PRONK,
IS STRIKING. WHEREAS PRONK WAS A FIERY IDEALIST, DE KONING
RADIATES PATIENCE, REASONABLENESS, AND PRAGMATISM. DE KONING'S
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MORE SUBDUED PERSONALITY COMPLIMENTS THE CAUTIOUS NATURE OF
THE NEW GOVERNMENT, WHICH IS MARKEDLY MORE CONSERVATIVE
THE THE SOCIALIST-LED DEN UYL CABINET. ALTHOUGH DE KONING HAS
SAID HE WILL CONTINUE PRONK'S POLICIES, ALL INDICATIONS POINT
TO A MORE MODERATE APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

2. THE GOVERNMENT INSISTS THAT AID SPENDING WILL REMAIN

AND ITS CURRENT HIGH LEVEL OF 1.5 PERCENT OF NET NATIONAL INCOME. THE TONE AND SUBSTANCE OF AID POLICY, HOWEVER, APPEARS TO BE SHIFTING SLOWLY TOWARD THE POLITICAL CENTER, AS INDICATED BY STATEMENTS OF DE KONING AND PRIME MINISTER VAN AGT. BOTH HAVE CALLED FOR CLOSER COOPERATION WITH THE EEC ON AID POLICY, SOMETHING WHICH PRONK FEARED AS A RESTRICTION ON HIS AMBITIOUS, SOMETIMES RADICAL POLICIES. THE BUSINESS ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT, WHICH PRONK PLAYED DOWN, HAS BEEN STRESSED BY HIS SUCCESSORS. THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAS SUGGESTED THAT HIGH PRIORITY WILL CONTINUE TO GO TO THE FORMER DUTCH COLONIES OF INDONESIA AND SURINAM, A MOVE WHICH WITH REGARD TO INDONESIA AT LEAST WILL DISTURB THE LEFT BUT PLEASE THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

3. SOME OF PRONK'S MORE CONTROVERSIAL POLICIES WILL NOW COME UNDER SEVERE ATTACK BY A GOVERNMENT COALITION WHICH INCLUDES THE RIGHTIST LIBERAL (VVD) PARTY INSTEAD OF THE SOCIALISTS. ALTHOUGH ALL OF THE 15 MILLION GUILDERS (ABOUT \$6.75 MILLION) EARMARKED FOR 1978 IS EXPECTED TO BE PROVIDED TO CUBA, MANY FEEL THAT AID TO CUBA WILL BE TERMINATED NEXT YEAR. AID TO "LIBERATION FRONTS" WILL ALSO BE PLAYED DOWN WITH ITS STAN-UCHEST DEFENDER OUT OF POWER (THOUGH PRONK IS NOW A MEMBER OF THE SECOND CHAMBER AND WILL CONTINUE TO DEFEND HIS POLICIES IN THE FORUM). NEVERTHELESS, SWAPO WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE AID (THE HAGUE 897). RADICAL PLANS TO RESTRUCTURE THE DUTCH ECONOMY TO IMPROVE THE TRADE POSITIONS OF THE LDC'S WILL PROBABLY BE GIVEN A LOW PRIORITY DUE TO A SLUGGISH DOMESTIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ECONOMY AND THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S RELUCTANCE TO DISTURB ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH ITS EC PARTNERS.

4. POST HAS PREPARED COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON NEW DIRECTIONS IN DUTCH DEVELOPMENT AID POLICY, THE HAGUE A-18 WHICH WILL BE POUCHED TO ADDRESSEES ON FEBRUARY 24. BROWN UNQUOTE VANCE

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